**FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

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| **AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY (Group 1)** | **AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY (Group 2)** | **VALUE CHAIN GROUP** |
| What mechanism can we put in place to reach 40,000-60,000 | | |
| * Working with local partners such DAES, FUM, CADECOM, NASFAM, Lead farmers, NGO | Profile the structures in the targeted districts   * FUM, CADECOM, Gov’t, (Reprogramming the care group approach) * MISST (activities so far done??) * Build the existing structures   Seed Fairs   * STAM could engaged (Seed inspectors, networks) | * Not 40 – 60,000 new households. Leverage on existing list of beneficiaries (from INVC). The data that INVC has provided totals circa 39 000. This does not include the seed fair figures. * The bridging activity does not add new beneficiaries. * ACE Market Information System has the INVC beneficiaries listed (not all of them – only those which have a “full” profile) * Do we have to go to 40,000? What is the number we can realistically reach? The figure of 40,000 comes from the productivity targets (which is 20,000 with an additional 1 or 2 people). This makes the 40,000 to 60,000 beneficiaries. * Need to communicate the bridging activity at the district level * Are we continuing to utilise the care group structure? It doesn’t appear in the CN * Current partners for targeting – go through the existing structures. Divide the partners on the district? * CADECOM is a national structure but it is set up slightly different according to the area. * To what extent will the shifting of partners affect the targeting? * In the past FUM was not in every EPA with INVC as INVC wanted to mitigate against double counting * The EPAs were selected based on the areas with the highest productivity * Choice: Ask the two partners to expand or you bring in a third partner * FUM can expand – it has the capacity but the farmers “belong” to a partner so FUM cannot necessarily expand to cover the NASFAM partners (for example) * NASFAM – will they continue to operate in the INVC areas without INVC funds? Yes. * INVC chose to work through the care groups   **SUGGESTION:** In the areas where there is FUM / CADECOM we can carry on. In areas where there are NASFAM structures we have to come up with a plan on how we are going to work with the INVC beneficiaries if we aren’t working with NASFAM.  Approach NASFAM to ask them to give the details of their INVC beneficiaries to the bridging project… possible? |
| * Integrating with other USAID founded projects such as MISST, NJIRA and SANN? |  |  |
| * Working with agro-dealers and other seed distribution outlets |  |  |
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| Considering project activities; what role can each partner play based on their strengths? | | |
| **Agro dealers** - Make seed available to target beneficiary  **MISST** - Make seed and improved agronomic practices available to target beneficiaries  **FUM** - Promote the use of certified seed to increase productivity; Build capacity of farmers on seed quality assessment(germination test; Build capacity of farmers to negotiate with agro dealers; Mobilize farmers for seed distribution through vouchers  **DAES** - Encourage farmers to use certified seed; Conduct demonstration plot to highlight the benefits of using improved seed; Awareness creation among farmers on the use of improved seed through field days, seed fairs; Capacity building for farmers on seed production technologies  **NASFAM** - Mobilize farmers for seed distribution through vouchers; Capture data of seed beneficiaries  **DAES** - Identify and mobilize farmers for the seed fair; Provide technical guidance on how to run the seed fair; TOT training for AEDO, AEDC, Lead farmers; Establishment of demonstration plots and field day ; Capacity building for lead farmers; Distribution of extension training materials; Provide feedback from farmers on extension needs  **CRS** - Print seed vouchers; Organize seed fair  **FUM, NASFAM, CADECOM** – Mobilize farmers to attend seed fairs; Establishment of demonstration plots; Conduct field days  **IITA** - Develop extension training materials  Local Partners - Provide extension advisory service; Distribute extension training materials; Mobilize farmers for extension services |  | * Timing – the idea is continuity and and transition – so there is no “gap” * If there are partners that need to continue with certain activities then they need to be able to continue (for example seed procurement is a lengthy process and needs to be in place prior to October. * Government structures – “we” should be complimenting their activities. Current partners are complimenting and working with govt extension. How clear is the role of the Govt extension services… do they have the resources? They have the mandate but how do they implement that mandate? One strategy to be implemented. Currently there are conflicts, DEC (multi-sectoral) and DAES – coordinating bodies for the sector. * FUM has worked with DAES. The role of Govt is to set policy and to guide implementation. * INVC approach to working with government structures (worked with DADOs). It reports to the district structure. The value chains work has been done through that. DADO sits on DEC. * ACE – project activities (in the CN) look at approaching buyers directly, why not collaborate with ACE structures and relationships with buyers? ACE Can bring the strengths of collateral finance, market linkages and trade facilitation. The question is how ACE will work with the bridging project * Access and availability of advance financing (bridge financing) * Government intervention – maize flooding the market * Collaborate seed fairs with the groups (CADECOM / FUM / ACE) certified seed.   **Seed fairs**; – concrete projected demand needed. Seed companies need to be involved. |
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| Think about some of the proposed approaches in the concept note. How and what will it take for the project to operationalize them – the voucher system// Seed fair system? What potential challenges and how can they be addressed? | | |
| **Challenges**   * Identification and profiling of farmers is time consuming * Validation of beneficiaries is cumbersome * Seed quality assurance is difficult * Seed traceability is difficult * Voucher reconciliation is tedious * Farmers follow up is difficult | Provision of seed   * Provide options in terms of the quantity * Model to be commenced early   Hold demonstrations | * Input suppliers – link farmers with STAM. * Access to finance (given a revolving fund of 20 million) * Not done well in processing (given processing equipment / threshers etc) * Biggest challenge is collective marketing – they struggle to aggregate * ACE has done well on SMS * INVC has linked farmers to markets (marketing tours). * ACE – facilitate direct trade and be more involved (lead) in the marketing tours * The partners were like brokers… * Major challenge of aggregation – is the capacity of the farmer association / cooperatives to buy. * More trust in the cooperatives than the associations. * INVC has promoted contract farming – with buyers such as sunseed and afri-nut.   There are elements that work, what will partners bring to the table?   * FUM: Build the structures (the cooperatives) that are there, organize the farmers, give them the capacity to cooperate with one another * FUM & ACE: Communication elements need to be integrated. Use of SMS system * ACE: access to collateral finance, access to storage, warehouse receipt system, facilitate trade (direct trade between sellers and buyers for soya and groundnuts, bids to buy / offers to sell, warehouse receipt sales * MIST: The seed is breeder seed, it is a high cost. Seed availability is an issue. They deal with seed companies – not with the farmers. The gap is between the farmers and the seed companies. It is not MIST handling that, INVC should do that. Seed producer groups are linked to seed companies. They then have their own marketing channels. What is the volume of improved varieties?   Geographic Areas / Targeting   * Targeting farmers with above 0.7 of a hectare (INVC). This is the majority.   Seed Fairs   * INVC has never done seed fairs, the seed fairs are not a continuation of INVC activities   Commercial viability of “hand outs” |
| **Solutions:**   * Training of agro dealers to provide extension services to farmers * Encourage farmers to interface with agro-dealers * Simplify extension massages for farmers |  |  |
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| What gaps have you noticed in the concept note that needs to be addressed when writing the full proposal? | | |
|  | * Consider the varieties to be promoted * Sub-committee to look at pigeon peas-seed sources * Develop a seed road map * Pre-financing the activity e.g. seed * Seed volumes-critical * Assess the rhizobium available in Malawi * IITA needs to consider about staffing * Partnership * Impact pathway and the M&E system * Revisit the project indicators proposed | Activity 1  Sub-Activity 1.1   * INVC does the assessment (the secretariat). Happens before the planting season. Needs to be integrated using ACE knowledge of the market. Responsibility is with IITA. IITA will lead.   Sub-Activity 1.2   * INVC is there until the end, IITA is there. FUM / CADECOM and ACE to be there.   Sub-Activity 2.4   * FUM / CADECOM to work closely with IITA |
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